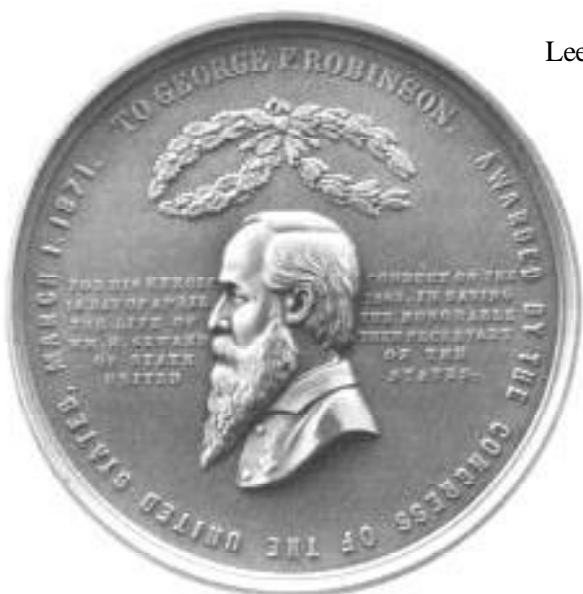


*GEORGE F. ROBINSON MEDAL*by  
Lee E. Poleske

Most Alaskans know that William H. Seward was the Secretary of State who negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, but most do not know that he was one of the targets of the assassination conspiracy planned by John Wilkes Booth. On the evening of April 14, 1865, when Booth shot Lincoln, Seward survived an assassination attempt. Seward was bedridden, recovering from a carriage accident, when the man who was to kill him, Lewis Powell (alias Paine) forced his way into Seward's home and attacked him in his bed with a knife, but was fought off by Seward's sons Frederick and Augustus, his daughter Fanny and the army nurse assigned to Seward, Sergeant George F. Robinson. Powell fled, but was captured three days later. After being found guilty of the attempted assassination of Secretary Seward by a military tribunal, he was executed by hanging on July 7, 1865.

In gratitude for his help in saving the Secretary of State, the Seward family helped Robinson, upon his discharge from the army, get a job as a clerk in the Treasury Department.

In March 1871 Congress authorized a gold medal to honor Robinson, but nothing was done until two years later. On February 20, 1873, the Treasury sent designs for the medal, done by G.Y. Coffin, to U.S. Mint director James Pollock. Anthony C. Paquet cut the dies. The medal was struck in October 1873. In addition to the medal Robinson was given a \$5,000 reward.

Bronze duplicates of the medal were authorized for sale to collectors. In 1984 Robert L. Seward, a relative of William H. Seward purchased over 100 of the bronze medals from the Mint. Over the years he has donated them to museums and other institutions associated with Secretary Seward. On August 15, 2005, during a visit to Seward, Alaska, he donated one of the bronze medals to the Seward Museum.

continued on page 79

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Our thanks go to Lee Poleske of Seward for this issue's lead article on the Seward assassination attempt. While not exactly Alaskan, one has to wonder what would have happened to Alaska has the assassination attempt been successful.

Another year has come to an end. At this time we would like to thank our contributors. Without them, this publication cease to exist. In order of appearance, our thanks go to:

Kurtis Hawk  
Kaye Dethridge  
Ken Rieck  
Carol Plante  
Joe Usibelli  
John Kallman  
Penney Durtschi  
David Phillips

Roy Brown  
Mike Locke  
David Byard  
Terrence Cole  
Jim Robb  
David Thorton  
Lee E. Poleske

If I have missed anyone, I do apologize.

Also, as the year ends, so do most subscriptions. If your mailing label ends with 05/10, it is time to renew. Please use the enclosed subscription form. Others subscribers whose subscriptions do not expire with this issue will also receive a subscription renewal form, prorated so that your subscription will end with issue #10 of 2006. You may renew now (and make my life easy), or we will send you another notice when your subscription expires.

If you choose to not renew your subscription, we would like to thank you for your support, and hope that we may be of service in the future.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year.

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Yukon Correspondent - Jim Robb  
Scandinavian Correspondent - Jorgen Somod

## ROBINSON MEDAL, CONT.

Robert L. Seward of Antioch, California is a cousin five times removed to William Henry Seward. Like all Swards related to William Henry, he is a descendant of Obediah Seward who came to the American colonies in the mid-17th century. Mr. Seward is a retired college teacher and administrator, who has extensively researched the assassination attempt.

Both the gold and bronze medals are 77mm in diameter. On the obverse is a bust facing left of George F. Robinson with the legend: TO GEORGE F. ROBINSON. AWARDED BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 1, 1871. FOR HIS HEROIC CONDUCT ON THE 14 DAY OF APRIL 1865. IN SAVING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE WM. H. SEWARD. THEN SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

The reverse shows Robinson struggling with Powell, who is attempting to kill the bedridden Seward.

In 1879, again with the help of the Seward family, Robinson was appointed Major and paymaster in the U.S. Army. Robinson retired in 1896 and died in 1907. Robert Seward has learned that Robinson's widow donated his gold medal to the Smithsonian Institution, but according to Mr. Seward, the Smithsonian can not, at this time, find it.

Another honor for Robinson came in 1965, when at the suggestions of "Bob" Bartlett, one of Alaska's U.S. Senators, a 10,425 foot high mountain in the Chugach Mountains, was officially named Mount Sergeant Robinson. It is about 41 miles east of Palmer; the exact location is 61° 34' 35"N, 147° 51' 00" W.

For more information about the attempted assassination, a good source is *Alias "Paine" Lewis Thornton Powell. The Mystery Man of the Lincoln Conspiracy*, by Betty J. Ownsbey, published by McFarland & Company, Jefferson, NC, 1993.

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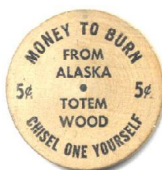
# PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

<b>Brooks (Livengood)</b> , Pioneer Pool, 25¢, B-5a	76.00	{ <b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909, ICG MS-62	OB275.00NB
<b>Chisana</b> , Anderton, \$5, B-1d	20.50	{ <b>AYPE</b> , ½ DWT, 1909, ICG MS-61	OB300.00NB
<b>Cleary</b> , Willis & Welch, 25¢, B-5a	OB50.00NB	{ <b>AYPE</b> , ½ DWT, 1909, ICG MS-62	OB300.00NB
<b>Cordova</b> , Horseshoe, 6¼¢, B-19a	50.00	{ <b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	OB300.00NB
<b>Cordova</b> , Little, Native Copper, 12½¢, B-22a	OB180.00NB	{ <b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	OB300.00NB
<b>Cordova</b> , Rosswog, 6¼¢, B-34b	37.00	{The preceding 10 items were relisted, and then ended early, presumably for a bulk sale.	
<b>Cordova</b> , Rosswog, 6¼¢, B-34b	42.00	<b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	155.00
<b>Fairbanks</b> , Chisholm & Hall, 12½¢, B-12a	OB150.00NB	<b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	127.50
<b>Fairbanks</b> , Smoke House, 25¢, B-53b	290.00	<b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	OB245.00NB
<b>Fort Yukon</b> , Carney & Irvin, 25¢, B-1a	45.00OB	<b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909, with loop	89.99OB
<b>Juneau</b> , Burford's Corner, \$1, B-12d	OB90.00NB	<b>AYPE</b> , ½ DWT, 1909	OB179.00NB
<b>Juneau</b> , Dave's Place, 5¢, B-18a	572.00	<b>AYPE</b> , ½ DWT, 1909	133.50
<b>Juneau</b> , McCloskey's, 12½¢, B-45a	OB275.00NB	<b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	140.50
<b>Juneau</b> , Mecca, 6¼¢, B-50b	OB150.00NB	<b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	172.49
<b>Juneau</b> , Mecca, 6¼¢, B-50b	RL95.00OB	<b>AYPE</b> , Set of 3, 1909, choice BU	OB750.00NB
<b>Katalla</b> , Ashland, 12½¢, B-1a	1.00OB*	<b>Alaska Gold</b> , ¼ Pinch, 1900	925.00BIN
*ended early - privately sold		<b>Alaska Gold</b> , One Pinch, 1898, doubled die?	975.00BIN
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Hotel Connell, 5¢, B-11a	OB150.00NB	<b>Alaska Gold</b> , One Pinch, 1898, doubled die?	975.00BIN
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Quality Bakery, 1 sm. loaf, B-48a	OB25.00NB	<b>Tierra del Fuego</b> , Spring Hill 50¢	RLOB£199.99NB
<b>Long</b> , Willis, 25¢, B-2a	OB40.00NB	OB = Opening Bid NB = No Bid RL = relist	
<b>Long</b> , Willis, 25¢, B-2a	OB39.95NB	RNM = Reserve Not Met R = Reserve	
<b>Nabesna</b> , Nabesna Trd. Co., \$1, B-1a	69.10	BIN = Buy it now	
<b>Nome</b> , Belmont, (12½¢), B-7a	110.00OB	<b>Alaska Rare Coins</b> , November 12, 2005 auction.	
<b>Nome</b> , Board of Trade, 5¢, B-8a	250.00OB	Lot	Bid
<b>Nome</b> , CW, Whatever, B-11a	OB153.50	233 Anchorage encased cent	48mb*
<b>Nome</b> , Lomen Bros., 25¢, B-30a	705.00	234 Bethel, Olson Bros. set of 3, B-3	10
<b>Nome</b> , North Pole Bakery, 10¢, B-39b	75.00OB	235 Craig, Lib's & Jessie's set of 3, B-3	32mb*
<b>Nome</b> , Polet Stores, \$1, B-41h	27.00	236 Elmendorf AFB, Civilian Club	35mb*
<b>Palmer</b> , ARRC, 10¢, B-1c	57.78	237 Fairbanks, Chena Bar key tag	45mb*
<b>Palmer</b> , ARRC, set of 8, B-1	935.00	238 Fairbanks, Fairview Hotel, B-19b	30mb*
<b>Port Alexander</b> , Pastime, 5¢, B-5a	OB25.00NB	239 Fairbanks, Pioneer Hotel, B-45b	35mb*
<b>Quinhagak</b> , Jean, \$1, B-1c	38.07	240 Fairbanks elongated cent	5
<b>Selavik</b> , Rotman, \$1, B-1c	19.99OB	241 Fort Yukon, Hotel, B-4c	32mb*
<b>Seldonia</b> , Cash Store, 5¢, B-5a	OB35.00NB	242 Gambell and Savoonga, 6 pcs.	40
<b>Seward</b> , Northern, 12½¢, B-8biii	OB30.00NB	243 Maverick, The Tanana	25mb*
<b>Seward</b> , Palace, 12½¢, B-9c	OB30.00NB	244 AYPE Gold Tokens	50
<b>Seward</b> , Seward Bar, 12½¢, B-14a	OB35.00NB	245 Alaska Tin	325mb*
<b>Sitka</b> , Tom Daine, 2½¢, B-6a	178.06	246 Purchase Centennial Medal Set	50
<b>Sitka</b> , Witz, 5¢, B-17a	19.99OB	247 Pope and President Reagan medal	40mb*
<b>Skagway</b> , BoT, 12½¢, B-4e	125.00OB	248 Alaska Medal Set	30mb*
<b>Skagway</b> , McCreedy & Elliot set of 7, B-16	OB135.00NB	249 Alaska State fractional medals	110mb
<b>Skagway</b> , Seattle Saloon, 12½¢, B-23ai	96.00	250 Alaska Railroad medals	60
<b>Snug Harbor</b> , \$1.25 Box of Clams, B-2a	OB24.95NB	251 Two Denali silver medals	45
<b>Teller</b> , NS Merchantile, 25¢, B-2b	21.50	252 Alaska 1 oz. silver medals	65mb*
<b>Tonsina</b> , Nafsted, 12½¢, B-1a	OB40.00NB	253 Anchorage Fur Rendez medals	35mb*
<b>Tonsina</b> , Nafsted, 12½¢, B-1a	RLOB40.00NB	254 BP silver medal	20mb*
<b>Tonsina</b> , Nafsted, 12½¢, B-1a	34.08	256 Alaska/Russia Lend Lease pins	35mb*
<b>Valdez</b> , C B Buffet, \$1 w/nugget, B-4ci	647.28	257 Alaska political pin back buttons	55mb*
<b>Valdez</b> , C B Buffet, \$1 w/nugget, B-4cii	535.00	258 Historically important newspapers-space	25mb*
<b>Yakutat</b> , St. Elias Packing, \$1, B-2c	95.00OB	259 Historically important newspapers-Cuba	25mb*
<b>Dawson, YT</b> , Tanana Hotel, 25¢	OB350.00NB	263 Lady's gold pendant	100
<b>AYPE</b> , Encased Cent, round	55.40	264 Lady's Gold Nugget Watchband	490
{ <b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	OB225.00NB	mb = sold to mail bidder. * = reduced bid.	
{ <b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	OB225.00NB	Total savings to mail bidders below their actual bid - \$334	
{ <b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	OB225.00NB		
{ <b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909, ICG MS-62	OB275.00NB		
{ <b>AYPE</b> , ½ DWT, 1909, ICG AU-58	OB275.00NB		

# MONEY TO BURN

by David Phillips



Continuing northward on our “Alaska Cruise” towns, we come to the third port of call, which is usually -

**Skagway:** This town is located at the head of a narrow, natural fiord, Lynn Canal. The town sits on a narrow strip of delta land between two ranges of mountains. Two rivers run into Lynn Canal from the narrow valley to the east of Skagway.

These rivers, the Taiya River on the north side of the valley, and the Skagway River, on the south side of the valley, were the routes through the mountains to the interior.

The two trails adjacent to the two rivers became famous in 1898, as the 33 mile long Chilkoot trail and the 40 mile long White Pass trail. Skagway was the starting point for both. Both trails ultimately led to the gold strikes near Dawson City, Yukon. At the top of the Chilkoot Pass, the North West Mounted Police insisted that each person entering Canada had one year’s supply of food and other life support goods. This worked out to be one ton of supplies per person, which all had to be carried over the 33 mile trail, requiring countless trips per person.

The construction of the now famous White Pass & Yukon Railroad in 1899-1900 to Whitehorse, Yukon, ensured that Skagway would live on after the gold rush. The railroad moved supplies into the interior and hauled mining concentrates back to tidewater.

Now Skagway is predominately a tourist community. It’s population of 880 more than triples in during the cruising season, as “extra” citizens come to town to work the gift shops, hotels and restaurants, conduct day trips in tour buses and on the W.P. & Y. RR, etc. The history in and around this town is fascinating!

The two woods I have chosen to illustrate from Skagway both emanate from the same locations, but are different. The story, as I have managed to piece it together, goes something like this:

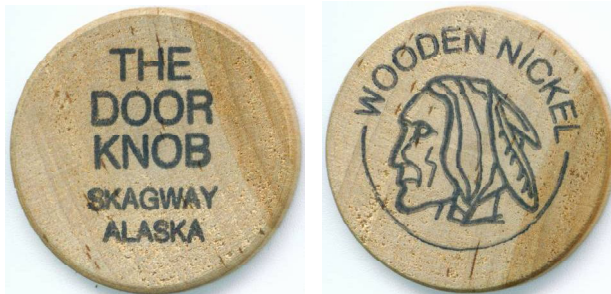
Approximately 1987, 1988 or thereabouts, the propri-

etress of the gift shop, The Door Knob, started handing out wooden tokens to customers and passers-by. These woods were not dated. There are three different variations of these “no date” woods. Then in 1990 and thereafter, she had the woods dated. The same obverse was used each year. This continued until 1998. Somewhere around here, she passed away. I do not know if there were any woods produced for 1999.

Her daughter then took over the store, renamed it The Purple Moose, and continued the tradition of handing out dated wooden tokens. The Purple Moose dated woods started in 2000 (1999???) and continue to 2005.

All Door Knob and Purple Moose woods are the standard size, and printed with black ink on both sides.

I am aware of 10 different issues of woods from Skagway. Of these, 6 have varieties. Thus the total number of woods from Skagway stands at 44.



The Door Knob, undated.



The Door Knob, 1990.



The Purple Moose, 2005.



# MILITARY CHALLENGE COINS



**EIELSON AFB:** Passing Gas, Freezing Ass (a refueling squadron?). White and light blue on bronze.



**EIELSON AFB:** 18th Fighter Squadron, Arctic Warriors, Farthest North Fighter Squadron, Blue Fox Maintainers. Bronze.



**ELMENDORF AFB:** Arctic Warriors, IYAAAYAS (If you ain't ammo, you ain't ....). Bombs are our business and business is booming, Penetration before detonation. Red Yellow, pink, blue and green enamel on bronze.



**ELMENDORF AFB:** 3d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 3 AMXS, Maintenance Warriors. Light blue, yellow, red, dark blue, black and green enamel on bronze.



**ELMENDORF AFB:** Team Elmendorf Annual Awards, Arctic Warriors, Heroes at Home ...and Abroad. Green, blue, yellow and other color enamel on silver finish.



**ALASKA (probably Elmendorf AFB):** 962 Airborne Air Control Sq., Eyes of the Eagle. Commander's Award for Excellence. White, black, yellow and green enamel on bronze.



**ALASKA:** U.S. Army Alaska; Ft. Wainwright, Ft. Richardson, Ft. Greeley. Presented by Deputy Commander, United States Army Alaska. Blue, yellow, red and white on silver finish. 32mm by 70mm.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Most Challenge Coins are about 38 to 40mm, though some are larger. Sizes are not usually reported in eBay listings. All are shown at approximately 38mm, but it must be realized that unless the size is noted in the description, this may not be accurate.



## FOR THE RECORD, CONT.



**ANCHORAGE:** East High (School), State Champions (Football) 85, 86, 87, 90, 03. Blue, pink, and red on bronze, approximately 40mm.



**VALDEZ:** Elks Lodge 2537, The Switzerland of Alaska. Gold (or silver?) on light blue plastic, 41mm (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



**FAIRBANKS:** Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, 100 years, 1903-2003. One ounce silver.



**WASILLA:** Wasilla Bar, Hot Shots & Cinnamons, good for one free drink, Beer/Well, Not good after 10PM. White on light blue plastic, 41mm (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



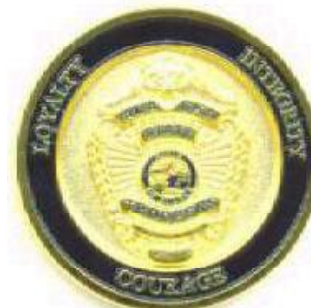
**JUNEAU:** J's Quality Auto Supply, 10% discount. Aluminum, 32mm (submitted by Kaye Dethridge).



**YAKUTAT:** Glass Door Bar and Liquor Store, good for one free draft or well drink. Black on wood.



**SOLDOTNA/KENAI:** Alaska Cab, \$5 ride value. White on light blue plastic, 41mm (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



**ALASKA:** Alaska State Troopers, Proud to be one of Alaska's Finest. Black, blue, red and other colors on brass.

